

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas talks about the inflow of people to South Florida since the 1920's*

Interviewer: Do you feel that that is going to be... the changes that you describe are going to be on the whole beneficial for Florida's environment or not beneficial?

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: Well, when you say environment... I think the... if we can have less agriculture we can probably get our water supply maintained better. So, it'll be better for the people. As far as the environment goes, I see nothing but building all the way right up to the waterline of the Everglades and all that... that's where the building is crowding it now. And in fact they are making a mistake in letting people, as in the East Everglades, build in the floodplain of the sheetflow. They're making that mistake and they are going to get in terrible trouble because they let the counties let people build where they don't belong. The State and I told the Governor and the people, the State should make up its mind how wide the course of the lower Everglades should be, which varies according to the amount of water: high water it's wider and low water it's narrower. But the people are going to be building right up to the edge of it, and if you don't look out the counties will let them build and they're already building in it. So, the State is going to have a terrible time someday cleaning up, getting the development out of the Everglades. That would be 'cause of the land getting too expensive for vegetables. The developers are going to be using that because of the people coming down; they want to live here. They don't want to raise vegetables, they want to live here. And, by taking it as it is today, as the last word, they're not foreseeing anything. They're not looking forward as they should.

Interviewer: Back in the '20s people were coming down, and uh...

MSD: They were coming down, but they're not coming down, they're coming down more in proportion to what they did in the old days.

Interviewer: Um...

MSD: After every war, more people have come down. I think after the First World War is when it really began, with the '26 boom and bust, and since then we've had this wave-like action. But the waves have been longer and longer and we've had very little recession.